



# PARENTAL SOCIAL SUPPORT: ITS ROLE IN UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN

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## ABSTRACT

Parents are like role models for children. Kids perceive the attitude of their parents towards learning. Parents can dynamically and effectively modulate the behavior of their kids. Parental care can exhibit enormous influence morally as well as socially. It is the authoritative nature of parents that can guide and bind them to ethics. Parents can mould and shape the destiny of their children. Parents can effectively prioritize the scheme of do's and don'ts. Parental care can bring laurels in shaping their future. It is the practical involvement of parents that determine the yield of their children. Parents can impact and ignite the desires, habits, attitudes and objectives of their children. Parental role can never be nullified by any standards of professional teaching. "It is the source which determines the course of flow". Parents can illuminate the darkest corners of their children with the warmth of their love, affection and care and it is the "divine" zeal and zest that differentiates parents from professionals. It is the consciousness of parents that determines the conscience of their children. It is the religious duty of parents to provide a stable and righteous atmosphere for the effective upbringing of their children within the realm of society. What proteins are to muscles ... parents are to children.

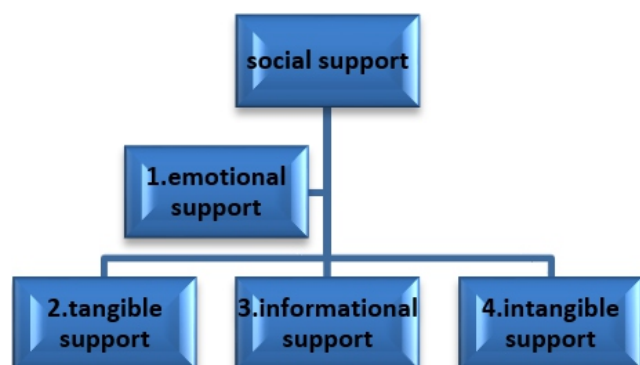
This paper examines various factors positive as well as negative influencing children growth and development. The researcher has highlighted some of the factors that can help in adjustment of children in society and to develop among them the spirit of service for mankind.

**KEY WORDS:** Well-being, Social support, Value education, Socialization, Self-appraisal.

## Introduction

Social support is a multidimensional and multifaceted term. It is the assistance provided to individual from different sources like parents, friends, teachers, government agencies, people in school, and significant others. Social support is defined as a "continuing social aggregates that provide individuals with opportunities for feedback about themselves and for validations of their expectations of others". (Caplan 1974)

Social support comes from different sources like emotional support, tangible support, intangible support, informational support, invisible support, companionship support and public aid.



1. **Emotional support:** providing love, affection, empathy, sympathy to a person.
2. **Tangible support:** providing financial assistance, basic material aids to a person.
3. **Informational support:** providing guidance, advice, suggestion to an individual and helping him/her to solve problems.
4. **Intangible support:** providing personal advice to a person.

Social support is a buffer which protects an individual from high stress levels. It lowers blood pressure and risk of other cardiovascular diseases. Past research has shown that "emotional support from parents may buffer or reduce distress by bolstering one or more aspects of self that have been threatened by objective difficulty". (Thoits P.A. 1983)

## Parental social support

### What is parenting?

"It is a process of care taking and raising child by both parents and helping them

to grow from dependent to more independent one". Parent -child relationship is mutual one. It is not one sided relationship; being parents the first duty is to nurture children in best possible way. Parents can build self-confidence, self appraisal and self competence of child and the ability to trust and not to stifle.

Parents must feel duty bound to protect and nurture their children against any odds.

"It is the creation that supersedes the evolution".

Parental support in form of love, affection, care etc is necessary for proper growth and development of child. It makes them physically as well as mentally fit. It helps them to adjust to the surrounding environment. Parents must earnestly oblige towards their social and ethical duties and responsibilities.

## Objectives of the study

- (a) To assess the role of parents in upbringing of children in Islamic guidelines.
- (b) To explore the role of parental social support in child development.
- (c) To find out the positive outcomes of parents support in upbringing of children.
- (d) To determine environmental role in socialization of children.

## Research questions

1. What is the impact of raising child according to Islamic teachings?
2. Does social support affects wellbeing and health of child?
3. What are the positive results of proper parenting towards children?
4. Does lack of parents support affects child's cognitive development?
5. What steps are needed for fulfilling the purpose of good upbringing?
6. Is value education need of hour?
7. How external environment helps in child development.

## Methodology:

The present paper is based on exploratory research.

The researcher has taken data from secondary sources, journals, articles, Various internet sites, books and other literature from past studies related to the study.

## Raising of Children in the Light of Islam:

"The parents are like a mirror, the reflection it gives, the child adopts. If the reflection is good, the child is good. if the reflection is bad, the child is bad." (Olgar, 2013)

In Islam the status of parents is raised above all kith and kin. Allah has created whole universe and parents are precious gift which Allah almighty has bestowed upon child. Allah has placed some duties on the shoulders of parents, the first and foremost duty is to prepare their children in righteous way by adopting the teachings of Islam and to make them a true believer.

**Prophet Mohammad s.a.w (pbuh)** says: "if your good deed makes you happy and your bad deed makes you sad, that is a sign you are a true believer".

#### Allah the almighty says in Quran:

"O! You, who believe, save yourself and your family members from fire whose fuel is men and stones." (Surah AL Tahreem 66:6)

Parents are guardian to a child their role is to protect and guide children against odds. To impart religious education and make them better human beings, it is important to note that spiritual upbringing is far more important than the physical upbringing. Islam has given high status to mother, paradise lies beneath her feet so actual upbringing starts in her lap. She is the care taker of child. She plays important role in educating her children. Home is the first Madrasah and mother is the best teacher for a child.

Allah the exalted has put trials on mankind. Children are the biggest trials they are test for parents. It is mentioned in the holy Quran

**WaiAAlamoo annama amwalukum waawladukum fitnatun waanna Allaha AAindah ajrun AAatheemun** (Surah an Anfal 8:28)

"Indeed your wealth and children is a test and that Allah - with (him) is a great reward"

Allah (glorified and exalted be He) says: "your wealth and your children are but a trial, and Allah has with Him a great reward." (Qur'an, Surah at -Taghabun 64:15)

We would all love to live the life of rich and famous but all that is skewed perception besides Allah can take it away from you instantly and leave you in a state of desperation yet with a much needed dose of humility and realize the wisdom of Prophet Mohammad s.a.w (pbuh) when he said **"True richness lies in the heart"** (Suleiman, 2013)

Parents should understand the concept that their children are a test and through this trial they will be held responsible for their rearing on the Day of Judgements. They should know how to deal with children.

"Allah tests humans with both calamities and blessings to determine who will be patient and thankful and who will be impatient and ungrateful. He also wants to determine who will be His obedient servants and who will be disobedient and defiant. He Will then reward or punish accordingly on the Day of Judgment." (Hamdan, 2013)

**Prophet Mohammad S.a.w. (pbuh)** being role model a perfect example for mankind something to emulate to learn from. Parents need to be a role model for a child. Ask yourself if I am teaching my son/ daughter the way taught by messenger of Allah?

Children should be first priority and all others things secondary. Parents should keep this in mind that providing basic necessities like clothes, food, shelter etc is not enough, they need to train and guide their children in right direction according to Islamic way. To inculcate in them moral values and religious education is the first job of parent.

#### **"Rather than instructing children, engage them in something"**

#### **Role and responsibilities of parents**

Understand your children: Give them Attention by listening and noticing them because if you lack in it, they will be listening and noticing other things. Attention deficit causes disaster. When you are understanding a person by showing your interest he /she feels at ease. It boosts their self confidence, so parents should understand the situation of a child and show interest in their activities.

Children search for Acceptance so parents should nurture their children with care, love showing empathy develops different departments of child.

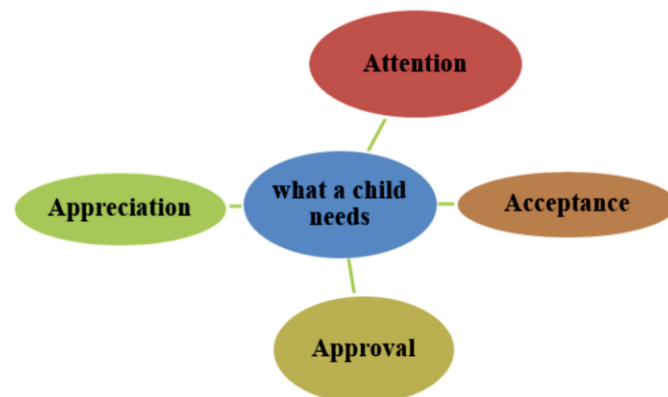
Praise your children value them, by showing Approval it enhances their wellbeing and self efficacy.

Show Affection to your child by telling them you are important, I care for you, you are my own. There are innumerable ways of showing love by kissing, embracing etc. children look up for this. Prophet Mohammad s.a.w (pbuh) used to kiss his grand children this is a mercy of Allah

Acknowledgement through Appreciation; appreciate your children when they do any act of kindness. Use verbal appreciation like jazakallahu khair. It increases their likelihood of repeating the act.

Be grateful to Allah the exalted who has given you blessing in disguise.

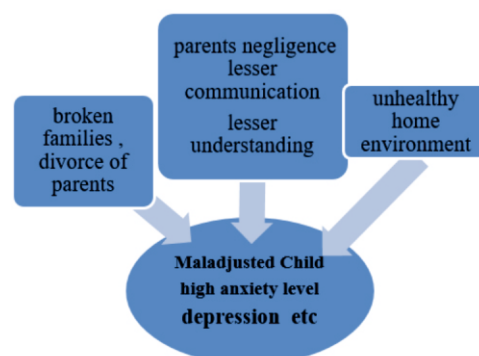
Relationship between spouses should be cordial and beautiful. It is a part of parenting as children grows up learning by mimicking their mother and father, so avoid using unnecessary hurtful words towards your spouse. If you keep fighting and use sarcasm inside home it will not only ruin your relationship but will influence the well being of your children. Be careful children will follow your habits and if you have good habits then it will be fruitful for them, otherwise will lead them astray.



#### **Golden advice to parents**

1. Engage your children in prayers before they mimic. Start it in early stage of growth. "Example is better than precept" so before you educate them ensure that you must be yourself offering five times salat.
2. Engage your children in useful activities like playing, reading Quran and memorizing it by heart.
3. Be happy in home: Spend time with your children, talk to them it builds strong communication if you want your children to confide in you. First you need to confide in them.
4. Start having dinner together. Family members should spend time together and teach your children manners of eating.
5. Avoid screaming, yelling at children, you may get immediate obedience but that is short lived to get longer term results the best way is to engage your children.
 

"Discipline changes behaviour but punishment suppresses behaviour" discipline changes behaviour beautifully. Islamic values do not change how you educate them may change in styles.
6. Praise your children in front of others. Don't embarrass your children in front of friends, relatives hide their mistakes and weaknesses don't reveal it openly.
7. Sit with your child let the child enjoy their childhood. Don't stop them for playing.
8. Make small commitments, be truthful and fulfill promises. Child loses trust when parents don't fulfill promises.
9. Prefer not to allow your young children to watch TV shows which are not appropriate. Programmes which are full of crime scenes, violence should be avoided. Everything that happens has current impact on children positively or negatively.
10. Take opinions of children when you decide to go for picnic or shopping. They feel they made decisions and it helps in building confidence.



### Psychological perspective in child development

Growth and development are usually treated as synonymous, but there are differences between these two so far as psychology is concerned.

All the changes which can be seen by naked eyes like change in weight, height size etc in different parts from infancy to adulthood comes under the umbrella of growth. On the other hand, development is wider than growth, it is concerned with synthesis of body structures and body functions. According to **hurlock**, "development is not limited to growing larger. Instead, it consists of a progressive series of changes towards the goal of maturity. Development results in new characteristics and new abilities on the part of the individual".

Growth and development varies from person to person, no two individuals are similar. The process of growth and development is the result of interaction between heredity and environment there is integration in the process of growth and development

A child passes through different stages of growth during his life cycle:

- Stage of infancy
- Stage of childhood
- Stage of adolescence
- Stage of adulthood
- Stage of senescence

Development can also be classified as:

- Physical development
- Cognitive development
- Emotional development
- Social development

Although grownups are not always mature they need special attention during growing years. To the child, physical changes may be awkward and puzzling and often anxiety causing. Parents may not make adequate allowances for the child's physical limitations, and may fail to realize how much their greater size and strength affects both his attitudes and their own.

### The crux of cognitive development

Human brain has enormous capabilities of acquiring, assimilating, adapting and processing knowledge. A child's brain is open to assimilate the vast world surrounding itself. He has a lot of curiosity to explore and experience the objects and situations. "Cognitive development is a wide term to denote all the mental procedures towards sophisticated thinking. Piaget and Bruner are the pioneers in explaining prominent processes of cognitive development in child. Piaget's study tries to explain the relationship between biological organization and intellectual structures as it enquires, basically into the mental process. Piaget reevaluated the entire arena of child psychology with his specific terms as 'schema', 'Assimilation', and 'Accommodation' in developmental process of child from infancy to adolescent period." (**Srivastava, 2011**).

"Piaget believed that a child would learn through their environment quite independently within each individual there is an internal self regulation mechanism that responds to environmental stimulation." (**Singh, 2011**).

### Emotional development

Emotions are involved constantly in parent child relationship. The feelings and impulses that constitute the emotional life of the child are interwoven with all his thought and actions. In early infancy the child's physical and emotional well-being and his freedom to express himself and learn depend heavily upon the care and affection he receives from his family, friends, teachers etc.

Social support is important in increasing well-being of a child. If parents are asked what they most want for their children?

The answer will be "happiness", "contentment", "health", "love", "confidence", "being civilized". In short, well-being is the most priority.

Parental support is more needed at times of crisis; if it is not provided it has a negative impact on well-being. Wellbeing of children is affected more by family members rather than friends (**Antonucci In press**)

Students showed positive impact of tangible, self esteem and appraisal support in a study conducted in college. These support acts as stress buffers and improve health and wellbeing. (**Cohen's et al. In press**)

"The well-being of parents results in greater well-being in their children". (**Belsky, 1984; McKeown, 2013**)

The above studies show that higher the social support, higher will be the well-being of children. If parents do not pay attention in the growth and development of children they may develop anxiety disorders. So parents should encourage their children to face difficult situations and helping in reducing their distress.

### Social development

Socialization is on its way when the infant begins to distinguish between individuals. With increasing age child becomes more outgoing and engages in cooperative activities and egocentricity diminishes. "Social support made up of family members and friends have been the subject matter of sociological study for some time. When provided from community resources envisioned as a key to prevention of mental issues and maladaptive behaviour" (**sarason & sarason, 1985**). To be effective in social relations, a person needs to acquire social skills promoting the process of socialization and adjustment to the environment. "Society is responsible for creating the conditions which allow young children to grow up and develop to the fullest & which enable parents to realize the commitments they have made towards young children." (**Baldwin, 1948**).

Psychologist **Lev vygotsky** in his sociocultural theory explains that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. "Vygotsky believes that a child learns in the social setting. He put emphasis on assisted learning which takes place through scaffolding". (**Singh, 2011**)

The Process of socialization of children and enabling them to understand the norms and expectations of the world around them. It is essential to create safe and secure learning environment, in which children feel able to take appropriate risks in a supportive settings.

Moral development: it is the process through which children develop proper attitudes and behaviours towards people in society, based on social and cultural norms, rules, and laws. It is necessary to develop proper moral values in children. Moral development is a process of reaching the feeling of justice in relation to others, the correctness or incorrectness of this matter, and the way a person behaves in each of these matters. According to Kohlberg "Moral development means change in how reason regarding moral issues, their attitude toward law breaking, and their behaviour when facing moral issues."

The social learning theory approach claims that humans develop morality by learning the rules of acceptable behaviour from their external environment. According to **Albert Bandura** "children learn simply through observing and imitating the behaviour of others who are taken as models."

### Need and importance of Value Education:

The main function of the education is the development of an all-round personality of the individual but nowadays more emphasis is put on oriented education, which takes care of the intellectual development of individual. In spite of spectacular achievements in science, man is not happy and contented. "One who has unlimited desires is deprived of the wealth of contentment". Man has become monarch of the entire world and aspirant of controlling the universe. In the present era, the erosion of values has led to the spread of callous, selfishness, unlimited greed, bribery, violence, destruction, abuse of human rights etc. the present society has lost faith in social, cultural and moral values. These are disintegrating and completely disorganizing. One finds social exploitation everywhere. When power and knowledge are being misused for vested interests, when nations do not trust one another, when barbarism, violence is spreading fast, it is essential that education should be value oriented. Value education forms the foundation of moral development. It is able to inculcate in children humility, truthfulness, tolerance, honesty, fellow feeling, spirit of service and sacrifice. Value education forms basis of humanitarianism which stands for peace, goodwill and understanding. It is helpful in fostering the brotherhood of man and unity of the world. Absence of value education is responsible for exploitation, corruption, disaster, selfishness and hatred in the world. Betterment of world is more or less dependent upon value education. Value education is able to create harmony in all aspects of educational philosophy. It sublimates and redirects our sex instinct into desirable and healthy channels and makes us to live and work cooperatively.

### Conclusion:

Home is the first place where the learning process of a child starts it is the primary informal educational institution. The mother is the first teacher of the child. A child spends most of time with mother during his/her infancy and childhood period. Children's behaviour during growing years can be moulded and shaped in desired form and direction by parents. During early stage of growth a child's mind is like a clean slate on which anything can be written. If negative impressions are provided to the child at home it hampers their growth and development. Proper care and attention is essential in child rearing. Parents play an important role in laying foundation of child's personality by providing affection, approval, acceptance and an open environment which helps in developing their cognitive, social, emotional and moral development and results in development of a healthy child or stress free child. Parents play pivotal role in upbringing of children. They make attempt to socialize the child and help them in developing sense of belongingness, self-esteem. When a child is loved, accepted and given due freedom to take decisions on his own it develops in them a sense of belongingness and caring attitude towards parents and significant others. In a nutshell, social support is primary factor in children's growth and development. It has a positive effect in child's rearing enhances well-being.

### Implications of the study:

- I. For proper growth and development of child's personality, it is of paramount importance that parents are accordingly educated.

- II. Parents need to inculcate morals values in children, which will make them enlightened. This will be able to develop in them a wider attitude towards life.
- III. Parents should encourage their children to face difficult situations independently. It builds their self confidence and they become socially aware.
- IV. Parents should focus on creating healthy environment .they can engage their children in playing games, organize discussions which helps in their cognitive and physical development.
- V. By showing love, care, empathy parents can channelize the negative energies of children in positive direction. They can deal with maladjustment. Some emotionally maladjusted children become delinquents to get attention of their parents. Lack of parental affection, lack of family ties, and absence of loving mother, parental irresponsibility and a steep in rate of divorce contributes to be a factor of delinquency.
- VI. Children need to be encouraged to try new things in order to grow in experience & gain additional knowledge, skills and understanding.
- VII. Children need to know that their ideas, opinions are valued and valuable.
- VIII. Parents must ensure social support for children well-being to help them to know themselves and what they can do.
- IX. Children should be given assistance in acquiring qualities of leadership.
- X. Parents should make effort for offering personal guidance to children, so they can adjust at school.
- XI. To develop in them civic sense and the spirit of service for mankind.
- XII. To develop open, participative communication with children, problem centered coping, confidence and flexibility are a key to deal with stress well.
- XIII. Parents should focus on education, healthy diet, security, good leisure time activities, and self discipline of children.

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